MARVEL

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J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI | JUAN FERREYRA

GHOST RIDER VS. GALACTUS

ONE-SHOT

RATED T+

THE MARVEL UNIVERSE IS FILLED WITH AN INFINITE ARRAY OF BEINGS: HUMANS, ALIENS, HEROES, VILLAINS, GODS, MORTALS, MONSTERS, CREATURES AND EVERYTHING ELSE THAT FALLS IN BETWEEN THE CRACKS OF REALITY. THIS IS BUT A MERE GLIMPSE AT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN TWO WORLDS COLLIDE. FRIEND OR FOE? ALLY OR ENEMY? YOU DECIDE WITH...

GHOST RIDER VS. GALACTUS

After his surrogate father fell ill, motorcycle stunt man **JOHNNY BLAZE** made a deal with the devil to save his life. Now bonded to the Spirit of Vengeance, he rides the streets as an agent of penance named **GHOST RIDER**!

The last surviving being from the prior universe, **GALAN OF TAA** was reborn at the beginning of this universe to fill the role of the Devourer of Worlds, consuming the life force of planets as the cosmic being **GALACTUS**.

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NEW YORK CITY,
LATE '70s.

"LOOK, PAL, I DON'T WANNA HAVE TO *HURT* YA--"

--'CAUSE I'M MEETING MY *SWEETIE* FOR *DINNER* IN TWO HOURS AN' I DON'T WANNA BE *LATE* 'CAUSE I HADDA FILL OUT ALL THE *PAPERWORK* EXPLAINING WHY I HADDA YANK SOMEBODY'S *ARMS* OFF.

AGAIN.

IN A DIFFERENT PART OF TOWN THAN THE *LAST* TIME.

HOTEL

CANDY STORE

CANDY

STAND BACK, OR I'LL SHOOT!

YOU KNOW WHAT THAT PEASHOOTER IS GONNA *DO* TO ME?

NOTHING.

AT.

ALL.

YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG MAN!

YEAH?

IS THIS YOUR FACE?!

IT'S A TERRIBLE PICTURE--

IS IT, OR AIN'T IT?

I... MAYBE...

WANTED FOR MURDER

YOU KILLED FIVE GUYS, AND THE PART THAT GETS ME IS YOU DIDN'T DO IT FOR POWER OR GLORY, YOU DID IT--

--TO TAKE THE TOP GUY'S JOB AS HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AT AN ACCOUNTING FIRM!

LIQUOR

IT WAS... IT WAS...

08

...IT WAS A REALLY NICE OFFICE!

AND WHO ARE YOU TO JUDGE ME?

HE'S NOT JUDGING YOU.

I AM.

...OH GEEZ--

YO, YO, VINNIE! IT'S--

GHOST RIDER!™

COME TO THE WINDOW OR YER GONNA MISS THE WHOLE THING!

WHAT?

"THE INEVITABLE"

J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI
WRITER

JUAN FERREYRA
ARTIST

VC's TRAVIS LANHAM
LETTERER

I AM YOUR JUDGE, I AM YOUR JURY, I AM YOUR--

I SAID IT'S GHOST RIDER! GET TO THE FRICKIN' WINDOW BEFORE HE--

SHUT! UP! I'M WORKING HERE!

SEE, YOU PISSED HIM OFF--

NOW, WHERE WAS I?

OH YES.

BAR

...JURY...AND EXECUTIONER.

LET YOUR GUILT OVER YOUR CRIMES CONDEMN YOU!

FACE NOW THE LETHAL FIRE OF... *THE PENANCE STARE!*

SORRY, I WAS TAKING A SHOWER--

JUST... LET IT GO, VINNIE.

AHH... AHH...

AAAAGGHHH!

SHHHHHHHH

BUBBLE BUBBLE BUBBLE

FLOOP

I ALMOST HAD HIM! WHY'D YOU DO THAT, YA BLAMED IDJIT?!

I DID NOTHING. THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS CRIMES CAME BACK TO ENACT VENGEANCE FOR HIS ACTIONS.

YOU GOT A UNION CARD FOR THIS KINDA THING?

MY WORK HERE IS DONE. I SHOULD--

HANG ON A SEC, JOHNNY.

LISSEN...I GOTTA GO PICK UP A NEW ***SUIT*** FOR A DATE WITH ***ALICIA*** TONIGHT--YOU WANNA COME WITH, MAYBE GET A COFFEE?

I DON'T KNOW--

YA GOT ANYPLACE ***SPECIAL*** TO GO FOR THE NEXT HOUR?

NO...

HEROES... BIG DEAL... MAKE A BIG MESS AND EXPECT US TO CLEAN IT UP.

GOOD. YOU CAN GIVE ME A RIDE ON THAT HOG.

IMPOSSIBLE TO GET A CAB GOING UPTOWN THIS TIME OF DAY...

NEVER GET THIS DUST OFF MY SHOES.

TAP-TAP-TAP-TAP-TAP

AHHHHHHHH-CHOOOOOO!

"DOES SIR APPROVE?"

YEAH... YEAH, NOT BAD... AND THE PANTS?

FLARED, YES, PER SIR'S REQUEST.

LOTTA POLYESTERS DIED FOR THIS OUTFIT--

SIR IS MOST DROLL. I'LL PREPARE THE CHANGING ROOM.

LISSEN, WHAT I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT IS... THAT ***PENANCE STARE*** THING, DOES IT WORK ON ***EVERYBODY*** WHO'S, LIKE, ***KILLED*** PEOPLE?

AS FAR AS I KNOW, BEN, YEAH.

COULD SOMEBODY USE, SAY, ***SCIENCE*** TO STOP IT FROM WORKING?

CLOSED

NO, IT'S SUPERNATURAL HELLFIRE--IT CAN'T BE STOPPED BY ANYTHING THAT ISN'T EQUALLY SUPERNATURAL. WHY?

I WAS JUST WONDERING IF IT'D WORK ON--

ARE YOU ***KIDDING*** ME?

DO I ***LOOK*** LIKE I'M KIDDING?

YOU ***LOOK*** LIKE A BRICK WALL WITH EYES.

EVER SEEN A BRICK WALL WITH EYES KIDDING SOMEBODY?

NO.

THERE YOU GO.

THE BIG GUY HAS SPENT ***CENTURIES*** DESTROYING WHOLE ***WORLDS*** TO FEED HIS HUNGER. HOW MANY ***PEOPLE*** HAS HE KILLED IN THE PROCESS? ***TRILLIONS?*** I DON'T THINK EVEN ***REED*** COULD FIGURE OUT THAT NUMBER.

EVERY TIME WE'VE GOTTEN IN A ***FIGHT*** WITH HIM, HE'S WALKED AWAY IN ONE ***PIECE.*** MAYBE THAT'S BECAUSE WE FOUGHT ***SCIENCE*** WITH ***SCIENCE.***

MAYBE WHAT ***YOU*** GOT, HE ***CAN'T*** FIGHT. MAYBE ***FINALLY,*** HE CAN GET BROUGHT TO ***JUSTICE.***

MR. GRIMM--

--THE ROOM IS READY FOR YOU.

THANKS.

THINK ABOUT IT, JOHNNY.

BUT HE'S IN *SPACE*, HOW WOULD I EVEN *GET* TO HIM?

I'M SURE YOU'LL FIGURE IT OUT.

THE *CASUAL* SECTION IS IN THE *BACK* OF THE STORE.

BUT PERHAPS THE *SPORTING GOODS* STORE NEXT DOOR MIGHT BE MORE TO SIR'S... *TASTES.*

FWOOSH

WOULD SIR LIKE A *WATER* WHILE HE WAITS?

SURE, YEAH, THANKS.

I DUNNO... IT'S KINDA TIGHT AROUND THE GOOD CHINA...

CAPE CANAVERAL, FLORIDA.
TWO DAYS LATER.

WE ARE NOW TEN SECONDS FROM LAUNCH FOR THE NEW COREALIS 5 SATELLITE SYSTEM, AND--

WAIT... SOMETHING... SOMETHING'S HAPPENING.

TRYING TO HALT THE COUNTDOWN BUT IT WON'T STOP.

THREE... TWO...ONE...

ENGINES FIRING.

WE HAVE LIFTOFF.

NOW LET'S KICK THIS BABY INTO HIGH GEAR!

BADOOM

LOCATION... IRRELEVANT.

NAME OF PLANET WILL SHORTLY BE OF ONLY HISTORICAL INTEREST.

"THE LAST OF THE SILVER CITIES HAVE FALLEN...AND THE SKY IS ON FIRE.

"WE THREW OURSELVES AGAINST **THE INEVITABLE.** BUT TO NO AVAIL.

"ALL WE WERE, ALL WE ARE AND ALL WE COULD HAVE EVER BEEN... IS AT AN END.

"LET IT BE SAID THAT WE FACED THE **GREAT TERROR** AND DID NOT LOOK AWAY. THAT WE FOUGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO **BE.**

"AND THAT WHEN THE END CAME, WE WERE NOT AFRAID.

"TO THOSE WHO MAY ONE DAY RECEIVE THIS SIGNAL...WE THE DEAD SEND OUR REGARDS."

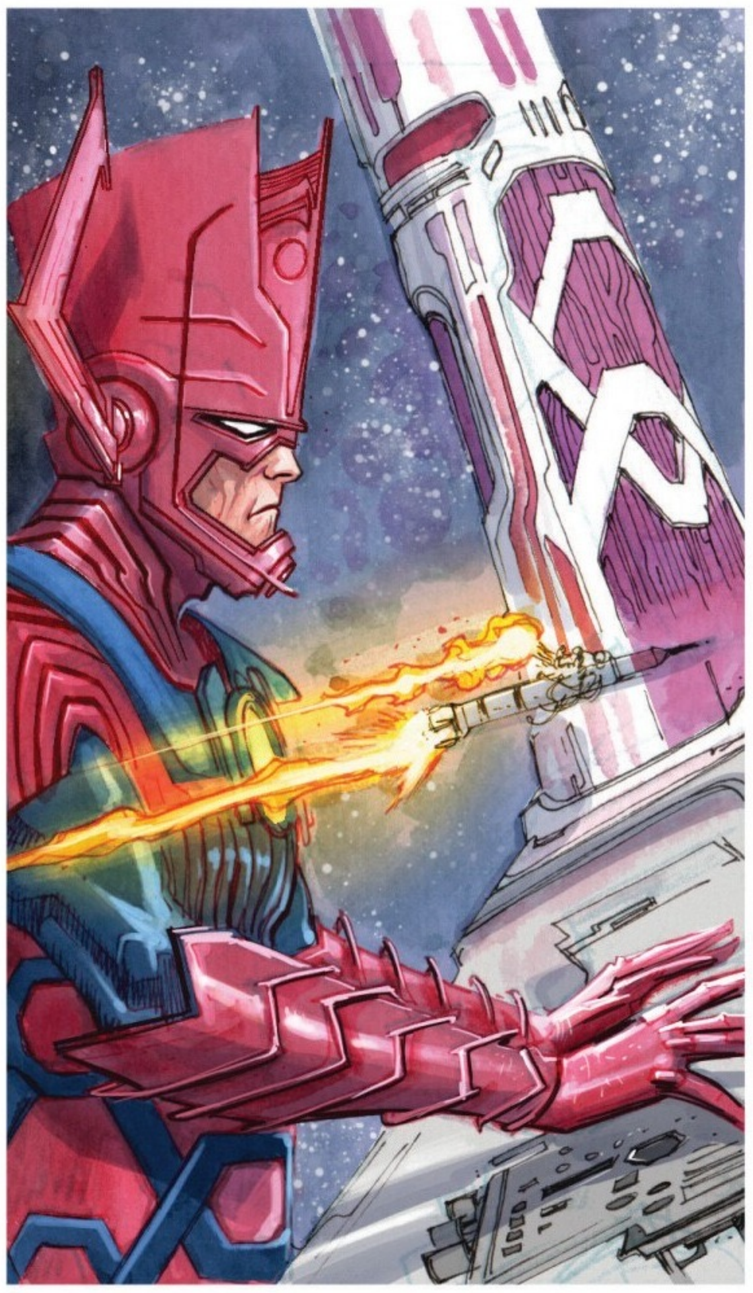
LAY IN COORDINATES FOR NEXT JUMP.

CONFIRMED.

UNKNOWN ENERGY SOURCE DETECTED.

GALACTUS!

I AM HERE TO CALL YOU TO ACCOUNT FOR YOUR CRIMES!



TURN AND FACE ME!

TROUBLE ANOTHER, LITTLE INSECT.

LITTLE INSECT?
FINE THEN.
ON YOUR TERMS.

FLOOM

THERE...

...BETTER?

SHRAKOOM

KLANG!

DO I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION *NOW?*

YES.

LET YOUR *GUILT* OVER YOUR *CRIMES* CONDEMN YOU!

FACE NOW THE LETHAL FIRE OF... *THE PENANCE STARE!*

...NO...

DON'T TURN YOUR BACK ON ME! *I'M NOT FINISHED WITH YOU!*

I'M AFRAID YOU ARE, SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE.

BUT THE *PENANCE STARE*--

--HAS NO EFFECT BECAUSE GALACTUS KNOWS NEITHER GUILT NOR REMORSE NOR SORROW FOR HIS ACTIONS.

HE *FEEDS* BECAUSE THAT IS HIS NATURE, JUST AS IT IS MINE AS *THE WATCHER* TO OBSERVE WITHOUT INTERFERING. DOES A *SHARK* ON YOUR WORLD KNOW GUILT FOR FEEDING, FOR SIMPLY FOLLOWING ITS *NATURE?* THEN NEITHER DOES--

SAVE IT.

I HAVE HEARD THIS FROM *OTHERS.* THE *PUNISHER. BULLSEYE. THANOS.*

AND I DO NOT *ACCEPT* IT. HOW MANY *WORLDS* HAVE *DIED* BECAUSE OF GALACTUS? MILLIONS? *BILLIONS?*

A PRICE *MUST* BE PAID, AND IF THE *PENANCE STARE* IS NOT SUFFICIENT, THEN THOUGH IT MAY TAKE A *THOUSAND YEARS,* WE WILL REMAIN HERE, *LOCKED IN COMBAT,* UNTIL ONE OF US IS DESTROYED. I HAVE NO OTHER *CHOICE.*

YOU BELIEVE YOU HAVE NO CHOICE BECAUSE YOU DO NOT KNOW THE *REST* OF IT.

THE REST OF WHAT?

IT IS KNOWN THAT THERE HAVE BEEN *MANY* UNIVERSES BEFORE THIS ONE WAS CREATED IN WHAT IS CALLED *THE BIG BANG.*

JUST AS IT IS KNOWN THAT *GALACTUS* WAS ONCE CALLED *GALAN OF TAA,* THE LONE SURVIVOR FROM THE UNIVERSE IMMEDIATELY *PRECEDING* THIS ONE, SAVED FROM DESTRUCTION IN A COSMIC *EGG--*

--THEN REVIVED IN *THIS* UNIVERSE WITH A *HUNGER* THAT COULD ONLY BE APPEASED BY CONSUMING ENTIRE *WORLDS.*

WHAT IS *NOT* KNOWN, BECAUSE FEW HAVE *ASKED,* IS--

--WHAT *HAPPENED* TO ALL THOSE PRIOR UNIVERSES... AND *WHY...*AND WHAT IS THE *MEANING.*

THE MEANING OF *WHAT?*

EVERYTHING.

"EVERY PRIOR UNIVERSE FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL CAME TO AN ***END*** BECAUSE THEY CONTAINED THE ***SEED*** OF THEIR OWN ***DESTRUCTION,*** BIRTHED AT THE MOMENT OF THEIR CREATION--

"--IN THOSE WHO WERE CHOSEN TO SURVIVE THAT DESTRUCTION. EACH OF THEM, IN A WAY, BECAME THE ***GALACTUS*** OF THEIR UNIVERSE.

"THEY BECAME KNOWN AS ***THE GREAT DESTROYERS.*** STARS, PLANETS AND GALAXIES FELL BEFORE THEM.

"UNTIL, IN THE END, AFTER A TRILLION, TRILLION YEARS...ONLY THE ***DESTROYER*** REMAINED."

"WAIT..."

...ARE YOU SAYING THAT ALL LIFE, FROM THE VERY *BEGINNING* TO THE VERY *END*, IS WITHOUT *MEANING?*

NO, I--

THAT UNIVERSE AFTER UNIVERSE, CREATION AFTER CREATION, WE HAVE NO GREATER PURPOSE THAN TO FEED THE *BEAST* THAT WILL ONE DAY DEVOUR US? IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY *SENSE.*

DOES IT MAKES SENSE TO PLANT A FIELD OF WHEAT AND NOT *HARVEST* IT? TO LEAVE IT TO ROT BENEATH THE SUN?

ALL THINGS DIE. ALL WORLDS END. IF THEY END IN SILENCE, AND DEATH ERASES ALL THAT THEY ONCE WERE, THEN THERE CAN BE NO GREATER MEANING.

BUT WHEN A DESTROYER *ABSORBS* A PLANET, MORE THAN MERE HUNGER IS ASSUAGED.

THE HUNGER IS SIMPLY A *MEANS* TO AN *END,* A WAY TO COMPEL THE DESTROYERS TO DO WHAT THEY MUST...

...TO GATHER THE HARVEST AND PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE BIRTH OF THE NEXT UNIVERSE FROM THE ASHES OF THE OLD.

"THEY HARVEST NOT JUST THE PLANET AND THE ***LIVES*** OF THOSE WHO LIVE THERE, BUT ALSO THEIR ***ART,*** THEIR ***MUSIC,*** THEIR ***STORIES.***

"ALL THE THINGS THAT GAVE THEM ***PURPOSE,*** AND ***BEAUTY--***

"--AND THE ***WILL*** TO FIGHT UNTIL THE LAST ***BREATH*** FOR THE RIGHT TO ***LIVE,*** TO ***BREATHE,*** TO ***EXIST.***"

*"LET IT BE SAID THAT WE FACED THE **GREAT TERROR** AND DID NOT LOOK AWAY. THAT WE FOUGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO **BE.**"*

"THIS DETERMINATION, THIS ***WILL*** TO SURVIVE, BECOMES A FORCE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO BEND CREATION TOWARD A DESIRE FOR ***NEW LIFE.***

"UNTIL FINALLY, WHEN ALL HAS BEEN CONSUMED, LEAVING ONLY THE ***VOID,*** THE DESTROYER REACHES CRITICAL MASS. THE DREAMS AND ART AND MUSIC OF A TRILLION HEARTS UNITE WITHIN HIM, READY TO BE ***BIRTHED ANEW.***

"THEY STRIVE WITHIN THE DESTROYER FOR ***RELEASE,*** TEARING IT ASUNDER WITH THEIR WILL TO LIVE, TO ONCE AGAIN BEGIN THE GREAT JOURNEY.

"THAT ENERGY HOVERS IN THE TIMELESS VOID, WAITING FOR A SINGLE SPARK TO LIGHT THE FIRE.

"A SINGLE... *THOUGHT.*

THE PURPOSE OF THE UNIVERSE...IS TO UNDERSTAND...

...THE PURPOSE OF THE UNIVERSE.

"AND THEN...

"THE CYCLE OF CREATION AND DESTRUCTION, LIFE AND DEATH AND ART AND BEAUTY AND MUSIC AND MEMORIES AND PURPOSE BEGINS AGAIN, SHAPED BY ALL THAT CAME BEFORE AND FUELED BY THE DESIRE TO LIVE ONCE MORE.

"AS A RESULT, EACH NEW UNIVERSE, EACH NEW CYCLE, IS STRONGER, BETTER AND NOBLER THAN THE ONE BEFORE. CLOSER TO ***PERFECTION.***"

AND *THEN* WHAT? WHAT'S THE END-GAME?

SOMEDAY, AN UNTOLD NUMBER OF UNIVERSES FROM NOW, PERFECTION WILL FINALLY BE ACHIEVED, HONORING THE MEMORY OF ALL WHO LIVED AND DIED ALONG THE WAY. THEN SOMETHING... ***AMAZING*** WILL HAPPEN. SOMETHING BEYOND EVEN THE WISEST OF US TO SEE.

AND EVERYTHING...ALL THE STRUGGLES, ALL THE PAIN, THE JOY, THE LOSS, THE DREAMS, THE ART, THE BEAUTY... ***EVERYTHING...*** WILL HAVE BEEN WORTH IT.

AND IT WILL BE... BEAUTIFUL.

SO NOW THAT YOU KNOW THE *TRUTH,* WHAT IS YOUR REPLY?

MY REPLY CONSISTS OF FIVE WORDS.

THE FIRST THREE WORDS ARE--

--"I DON'T CARE."

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW WHAT THE *OTHER* TWO WORDS ARE?

GALACTUS DOESN'T GET A FREE PASS BECAUSE OF SOMETHING THAT *MIGHT* HAPPEN A TRILLION YEARS FROM NOW. HE CAN BE DESTROYED *NOW*--

YES, AND FUTURE UNIVERSES MAY NOT BE BORN AS A RESULT.

NOT MY PROBLEM.

I DON'T *CARE* WHAT HAPPENS IN A TRILLION YEARS. ALL I CARE IS WHAT HAPPENS RIGHT NOW, AND I'M NOT *DONE* WITH *THIS* OR WITH *HIM*--

YES, YOU ARE.

I SAID--

WHAT YOU *SAID*... DOES NOT *MATTER*.

LOOK, I--

HURRRRRR...

BURGER QUEEN

STAR WARS

HEY...YO, JOHNNY--

ALICIA AND ME JUST GOT SEATED...YA WANNA JOIN US FOR DINNER? THERE'S A SPARE CHAIR IF YA PROMISE NOT TO BURN THE PLACE DOWN.

TOC! TOC!

SURE. WHY NOT?

THIS IS OUR FAVORITE DINNER SPOT. THE FLAVORS ARE JUST EXQUISITE.

AND HEY, I GOTTA SAY, THE LIVE PIANO IS... I AIN'T EVEN GOT WORDS FOR IT.

Restaurant

IT'S BEAUTIFUL.

EXACTLY. AND AS LONG AS THERE'S ***BEAUTY*** IN THE WORLD, THERE'S A REASON TO KEEP ***GOING***, YA KNOW? EVEN FOR A SLOB LIKE ME.

YOU HAVE GREAT ***INNER*** BEAUTY, BEN.

YEAH...THAT AND FIVE BUCKS WILL GET ME A COFFEE. AMIRIGHT, JOHNNY? WHAT'S ***INNER BEAUTY*** WORTH?

Restaurant

EVERYTHING, APPARENTLY.

SO, PASS THE SALT?

SURE. HOW'S THE SUIT, BEN?

HONESTLY, IT'S STILL A LITTLE TIGHT IN THE

END.

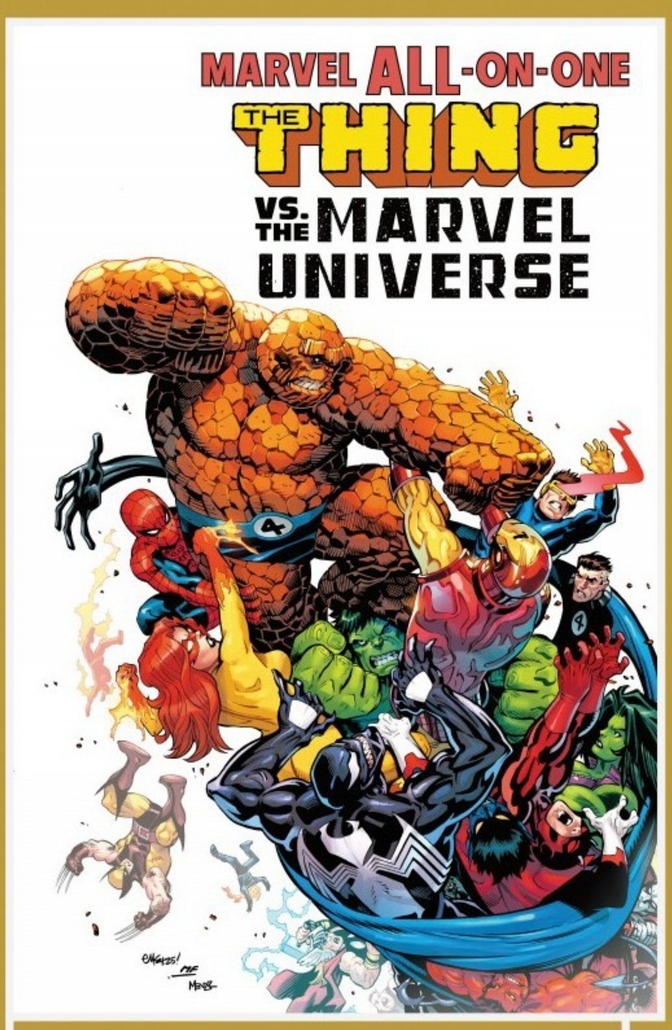
NEXT ISSUE

ON SALE IN JULY

SPIDER-MAN VERSUS EVERYONE!

PETER PARKER was just trying to have a nice night out with **MARY JANE**, but wouldn't you know it: The Parker Luck has filled his evening with an assortment of some of the world's most vile villains! With **SPIDEY**, **THOR**, **DR. STRANGE**, **MAGNETO**, **LOKI**, **DR. OCTOPUS** and many more all in one room, things are bound to explode! **J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI** wraps up this unique series of one-shots alongside artist extraordinaire **PHIL NOTO**! Don't miss it!

COLLECTING ALL SIX ONE-SHOTS, ON SALE LATER THIS YEAR



CHECK IT OUT FOR MORE ALL-OUT MARVEL ACTION, IN AUGUST!

CHECKLIST

- ■ DOCTOR DOOM & ROCKET RACCOON #1
- ■ CAPTAIN AMERICA & VOLSTAGG #1
- ■ NICK FURY VS. FIN FANG FOOM #1
- ■ HULK & DOCTOR STRANGE #1
- ■ GHOST RIDER VS. GALACTUS #1
- □ SPIDER-MAN VS. THE SINISTER SIXTEEN #1